

**MARKETING
IDENTITY:
POWER(S)
OF COMMUNICATION**

**MARKETING
IDENTITY**

**THE POWER(S)
OF COMMUNICATION**

ÜCM FMK

**Bianka Francistyová
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(eds.)**

Faculty of Mass Media Communication
University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava

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MARKETING IDENTITY: POWER(S) OF COMMUNICATION

International Scientific Conference “Marketing and Media Identity: Power(s) of Communication”, 11th–12th November 2025, Voderady, Slovakia.

The international scientific conference held annually by the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava has become a traditional event supported and attended by renowned mass media communication theorists and researchers as well as by media and marketing professionals. The aim of the conference is to discuss the latest knowledge and trends in the field of marketing communication and to create a space for sharing and disseminating up-to-date scientific knowledge and practical experience in the fields of marketing, media studies and communication sciences while outlining the importance of innovations and supporting the critical dialogue between scholars affiliated with academic institutions and professionals with practical experience. The annual international conference Marketing and Media Identity (formerly called New Trends in Marketing and re-named in 2013 to Marketing Identity and again re-named in 2022), which was held for the 18th time. The conference took place on 11th–12th November 2025 in Voderady. It was attended by more than 100 participants.

The main theme of the conference was concisely expressed by its subtitle: Power(s) of Communication. Marketing and Media Identity has always tried to react to the latest trends in marketing communication and media production.

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SUSTAINABILITY IN INFLUENCER MARKETING – A BIBLIOMETRIC AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

Simona Bartošová

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Abstract:

Social media has become an essential platform for shaping consumer attitudes and influencing purchasing behaviour, with influencers playing a key role in promoting environmentally sustainable products and lifestyles. Utilising social media for marketing communication is now a widespread trend. The paper presents a bibliometric and content analysis of the academic literature on influencer marketing. The objective of this paper is to analyse the development and current state of research on influencer marketing, with particular attention to its connection with sustainability. The research and data collection process took place in October 2025. Drawing on data from the Scopus database and complementary open-access sources published between 2016 and 2025, the study maps key research directions, dominant themes, and underexplored areas. Using VOS viewer software, six thematic clusters were identified, highlighting the multidisciplinary nature of influencer marketing research that spans marketing, communication, psychology, and public health. Despite growing attention to ethical and environmental aspects, the findings reveal that sustainability is not yet a distinct or dominant topic within this field. Only a limited number of studies explicitly address sustainable influencer marketing or eco-influencers. This finding highlights a significant research gap and underscores the need for deeper exploration of how influencers can contribute to promoting sustainable lifestyles and responsible consumer choices. The paper concludes by outlining the main limitations of existing studies and suggesting directions for future research.

Keywords:

Bibliometric Analysis. Consumer Behaviour. Influencer Marketing. Social Media Communication. Sustainability.

1 Introduction

Social media has become a crucial tool in shaping attitudes and influencing purchasing decisions, with influencers playing a significant role in promoting environmentally sustainable products and lifestyles. The use of social media for marketing communication is currently a common trend (Andangsari et al., 2013). Several well-known examples of social media platforms include Meta (Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, WhatsApp), LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube (Iankova et al., 2019). Influencer marketing is a new strategy used by companies to promote their services and goods by partnering with individuals who have firm social media profiles with many followers (Apostol et al., 2024). It represents a new frontier of opportunities and is considered one of the fastest-growing tools for acquiring new customers in the online space (Oliveira & Chimenti, 2021). During a global survey conducted in 2024 among PR agencies, marketing agencies, brands, and other relevant professionals, 37.6% of respondents stated that their organisations collaborate with up to 10 influencers, while 14.7% reported working with more than a thousand influencers (Statista.com, 2024). Moreover, the size of the global influencer marketing market has more than tripled since 2020. It is estimated that by 2025, the market will reach a record high of approximately \$33 billion. As social media influencers represent an important communication channel between businesses and consumers, and are a driving force in contemporary marketing, they can contribute to reducing the sustainability information deficit and stimulating responsible consumer behaviour. They could reach a broad audience and shape purchasing preferences, while also playing a key role in conveying relevant information about environmentally responsible products. Moreover,

according to Lou and Yuan (2019), a correlation exists between influencer marketing on social media and consumer purchase intention. To promote sustainable consumer behaviour, we see room for improvement, particularly through influencers.

Depending on the target group, the campaign goal, and the nature of the product/service, influencer marketing can occur in various settings. It most often occurs in the online environment, via social networks, blogs, websites, or podcasts, but can also take place in offline settings, such as at various events and conferences, in the press, on TV, or at meet-and-greet events. Influencer marketing on social media represents one of the fastest-growing and most recently emerging areas within marketing research. The average age of publications in this field is only 1.97 years, underscoring the novelty and timeliness of the topic (Kuttukkan et al., 2025). Influencer marketing does not have to be limited to social networks; it can also extend to the offline environment, where the brand is associated with the influencer's face. According to Leung et al. (2022), online influencer marketing (OIM) is a strategy whereby a firm selects and incentivises online influencers to engage their social media followers, to leverage these influencers' unique resources to promote the firm's products or services. The goal is to enhance the firm's performance.

There is no doubt that influencer marketing is not only a hot topic for business but has also led to an increasing number of studies conducted on social media influencers (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Kay et al., 2020; Hudders & Lou, 2022; Tanwar et al., 2022; Erdoğan & Mucan, 2024). To systematise and synthesise the current body of knowledge, this study aims to fill the gap by employing a different approach, utilising bibliometric analysis.

2 Methodology

The objective of this paper was to analyse the development and current state of research on influencer marketing, with particular attention to its connection with sustainability. By conducting a bibliometric and content analysis of academic literature from the Scopus database and other relevant sources, the study sought to identify key research directions, thematic clusters, and underexplored areas. This analysis revealed how sustainability is addressed within influencer marketing research and where further investigation is needed.

In the process of preparing the paper, we analysed relevant bibliographic sources (both domestic and international), including books, academic journals, and credible online resources. The research was conducted from the Scopus database in October 2025. We analysed open-access sources from the last 10 years (since 2016). In total, 1,152 sources were included in the analysis. The bibliometric mapping was conducted using the VOSviewer software, which enables visualisation of co-occurrence relationships between keywords and identification of thematic clusters. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative analysis of publications and citations that identifies trends, key authors, institutions, countries, and/or scientific impact. This tool, based on the Visualisation of Similarities (VOS) technique, is particularly suited for mapping co-citation relationships or keyword co-occurrences. The study employs a distance-based bibliometric map (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010), where the proximity between elements indicated the strength of their relationship: the shorter the distance, the stronger the link. Such mapping effectively reveals clusters of related items.

In developing the methodological framework, we drew inspiration from the study by Filippelli (2024), which applied bibliometric and network analysis in the context of sustainability in the food sector. Our analysis focused on the keyword "influencer marketing". The resulting network maps revealed the main research areas, their interconnections, and the extent to which sustainability-related terms appear within this field. Following the bibliometric mapping, a content analysis of the selected scientific and review articles was conducted to interpret the identified clusters and research directions. Building on the studies of several

authors (Abhishek & Srivastava, 2021; Baser & Bakirtas, 2023; Vila-López et al., 2025; Pujadas-Gómez et al., 2025) focused on mapping trends, influential authors, dominant topics, and the development of virtual influencers, we formulated the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the main research directions in influencer marketing?

RQ2: To what extent is influencer marketing associated with sustainability topics?

RQ3: What future research directions emerge from existing studies examining the impact of influencers on sustainable consumer behaviour?

3 Results

3.1. Keyword Influencer Marketing

To answer the first research question (RQ1), we conducted a bibliometric analysis using VOS viewer. The visualisation chart was created using the VOS viewer (2025) tool, based on the keyword, and shows thematic clusters related to “influencer marketing” (Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2). The visualisation presents a bibliometric network map illustrating the conceptual landscape of research related to influencer marketing and its interconnected themes. The map reveals six distinct but closely related clusters, each represented by a different colour and highlighting specific areas of academic focus and collaboration.

The *Red Cluster* represents the core of the network, centred around influencer marketing, social media influencers, and consumer behaviour. It emphasises issues such as credibility, trust, engagement, parasocial relationships, and buying behaviour. This cluster also includes discussions about virtual influencers, advertising disclosure, and transparency, reflecting growing interest in how authenticity and trust influence consumer decision-making and brand perception in digital environments. The *Green Cluster* connects themes related to social media, marketing, and digital networks. It explores online social networks, viral marketing, brand engagement, information diffusion, and the use of machine learning in digital communication. This segment reflects the technological and strategic dimensions of influencer marketing, focusing on how digital platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok facilitate audience interaction, content creation, and brand communication. The *Blue Cluster* deals with the ethical and health-related dimensions of influencer marketing, focusing particularly on its effects on children and adolescents. It includes themes such as public health, food marketing, advertising literacy, transparency, and health communication. Studies in this cluster often examine how influencers affect youth behaviour in areas such as food consumption, e-cigarette use, or alcohol promotion, emphasising the importance of ethical standards, regulation, and responsible digital advertising. The *Yellow Cluster* explores the concepts of credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness in influencer marketing. It connects psychological and behavioural factors such as attitude formation, persuasion, and purchase intention with marketing effectiveness. This segment highlights how authenticity, source credibility, and expert endorsement shape consumer attitudes and strengthen the persuasive impact of influencer campaigns. A smaller *Light Blue Cluster* overlaps with the blue one but focuses more specifically on food marketing, consumer preferences, and behavioural reactions to influencer-driven promotions. It includes topics such as brand loyalty, food intake, and consumer awareness, showing how social media content influences everyday consumption patterns. Finally, the *Purple Cluster* encompasses the theoretical and psychological foundations of influencer marketing. It includes models such as the theory of planned behaviour, the elaboration likelihood model, and research on information processing and attitude toward advertising. This cluster integrates conceptual approaches that explain the psychological mechanisms underlying persuasion, motivation, and consumer behaviour in digital contexts.

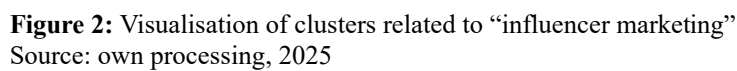
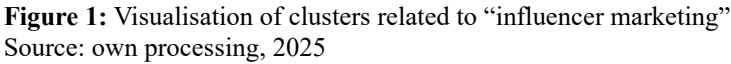


Table 1: Cluster division

Cluster	Colour	Items	Main topics (Occurrences)
C1	Red	105	Social media (393) Influencer marketing (316) Instagram (100) Digital marketing (68) Social media influencer (57)
C2	Green	74	Marketing (284), Influencers (96), Influencer (94), Social networking online (74)
C3	Blue	53	Article (84), Advertising (79), Female (70)
C4	Yellow	30	Human (132), Humans (105), Adolescent (52)
C5	Purple	26	Communication (19), Covid-19 (17)
C6	Light blue	24	Male (63), Adult (48)

Source: own processing, 2025

3.2. Recent Studies Focused on Influencer Marketing

In recent years, we have witnessed a significant expansion of research focused on influencer marketing. Scholars have approached this field from multiple perspectives, including the mapping of online influencer marketing trends, the analysis of its impact on brand perception, and the examination of its influence on consumer attitudes toward specific products. In response to RQ1 (What are the main research directions in influencer marketing?), the bibliometric analysis revealed six interconnected thematic clusters representing these directions. These clusters demonstrate that the field is structured around interconnected topics, including *marketing*, *psychology*, *communication*, and *public health*. This highlights the field's evolution from practical marketing strategies to deeper explorations of ethics, theory, and consumer psychology.

The article by Abhishek and Srivastava (2021) presents a bibliometric analysis of influencer marketing's impact, identifies six primary research clusters, and provides a clear direction for future research in this area. Tanwar et al. (2022) reviewed 76 academic studies on influencer marketing from 2011 to 2019, utilising both bibliometric analysis and content analysis. The data set of their study included articles from some of the top management journals. Baser & Bakirtas (2023) identify past, current, and future thematic trends in influencer marketing research, revealing key trends in articles, authors, countries, and journal performance. Pujadas-Gómez et al. (2025) map the academic landscape of virtual influencer research, identifying key trends, influential authors, and dominant themes in the field. Influencers' content serves two primary goals: increasing followers' purchase intention and enhancing knowledge or interest in the product (Kay et al., 2020). When followers are exposed to an influencer's post, whether it concerns a product or a particular topic, it can evoke positive emotions and foster a more personalised interaction between the follower and the influencer. Over time, this relationship often culminates in a purchasing decision. Compared to traditional marketing, influencer marketing thus enables the development of deeper and more engaging connections with consumers (Erdoğan & Mucan, 2020). Hussain et al. (2025) confirm that the perceived influence of social media influencers has a positive effect on travellers' inspiration towards sustainability and their involvement in sustainable travel practices. The study shows that inspiration towards sustainability and participation in sustainable travel practices significantly mediate the effect of social media influencers on sustainable behaviour.

Table 2: Recent studies focused on influencer marketing

Article's category	Number of studies	Authors
Online influencer marketing	3	Campbell & Farrell (2020), Leung et al. (2022), Farivar & Wang (2022)
Bibliometric Mapping (of Influencer Marketing/ Influencer Marketing Trends)	12	Chang et al. (2020), Fernandez-Prados et al. (2021), Abhishek & Srivastava (2021), Vrontis et al. (2021), Tanwar et al. (2022), Baser & Bakirtas (2023), Shailza & Sarkar (2024), Erdoğan & Muchan (2024), Pujadas-Gomez et al. (2025), Vila-López et al. (2025), Shaheen (2025), Kuttukkan et al. (2025)
The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Brand Perception	6	De Veirman et al. (2017), Lou & Yuan (2019), Hughes et al. (2019), Delbaere et al. (2021), Kim & Kim (2022), Suganya Priya & Sabitha (2025)
Influencer Marketing and Consumer Behaviour	5	Chopra et al. (2020), Audrezet et al. (2020), Kay et al. (2020), Pop et al. (2022), Muda & Hamzah (2021)
Impact of e-Marketing on Influencing Consumer Purchase Decisions	4	Kumar et al. (2019), Alves de Castro et al. (2022), Pradhan et al. (2023), Muna et al. (2025)
Impact of influences on sustainable consumer behaviour	6	Chen (2019), Bryła et al. (2022), Apostol et al. (2024), Murano et al. (2024), Sousa et al. (2025), Hussain et al. (2025)

Source: own processing, 2025

A study by Chopra et al. (2020) using the Theory of Planned Behaviour and social learning theory focused on how influencer marketing drives consumer behaviour at four levels: by raising brand awareness, subject matter expertise, brand preference, and brand loyalty. Similarly, Pop et al. (2022) utilised consumer journey theory for investigating the impact of SMI trust on customer travel decision-making. In a study on Generation Y, Muda & Hamzah (2021) investigated the effects of consumers' perceived source credibility of UGC in YouTube videos on their attitudes and behavioural intentions. Unlike traditional advertising, influencer marketing relies on trust and authenticity. Influencers establish genuine relationships with their audiences, making their endorsements appear as credible recommendations rather than purely commercial promotions (Panopoulos et al., 2023). This element of trust is essential for environmentally conscious consumers, who tend to prioritise transparency and shared values (Prakash et al., 2024). In addition, influencer marketing allows brands to achieve more precise targeting. By building loyal communities around specific interests, influencers enable companies to reach niche segments of eco-conscious consumers effectively (Sun & Wang, 2020).

On the one hand, sustainability has become a key factor influencing consumer behaviour across various industries, and its effect is apparent. With growing awareness of environmental and ethical issues, consumers are reevaluating their purchasing decisions, favouring products and brands that align with their values. On the other hand, Shatnawi et al. (2019) found that while influencers can raise awareness, this does not necessarily translate into green purchasing behaviour. The impact of celebrities and online communities often lies more in fostering engagement than in driving direct purchase conversions (Khare et al., 2022).

Therefore, to address RQ2 (To what extent is influencer marketing associated with sustainability topics?), we analysed keywords in the Scopus database. The VOS visualisation in Figures 1 and 2 shows us that sustainability itself is not a distinctive topic in influencer marketing. Sustainability can be observed within Cluster 1 in four key words, each with a certain level of occurrence: Sustainability, Sustainable development, Sustainable consumption and Sustainable marketing (Table 3).

Table 3: Keywords with a certain level of occurrence

Cluster	Colour	Total occurrences	Main topics	Occurrences
C1	Red	56	Sustainability	33
			Sustainable development	10
			Sustainable consumption	8
			Sustainable marketing	5

Source: own processing, 2025

In our article, we did not focus solely on the bibliographic analysis of the term “influencer marketing”. We also aimed to identify relevant articles using other related keywords. When we searched the database using the keyword “sustainable influencer marketing”, limited to open-access articles and the period from 2016 onward, we found only 86 results. When we used the term “eco influencer marketing” under the same conditions, we found only 18 results. Although terms such as sustainability, sustainable development, sustainable consumption, and sustainable marketing appear within Cluster 1 of the bibliographic analysis, their frequency of occurrence remains relatively low.

4 Discussion

The findings indicate that sustainability is not yet a distinctive or dominant topic within the field of influencer marketing research. This suggests that the connection between influencer marketing and sustainability is still underexplored. Furthermore, the limited number of studies addressing this topic confirms that this research area is in its early stages of development. Overall, these results highlight the emerging nature of this topic and point to substantial opportunities for further academic inquiry and theoretical advancement.

However, research on influencer marketing and its effect on consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of eco-conscious consumption, is vital for understanding contemporary consumer trends and assessing the effectiveness of influencer campaigns aimed at environmentally aware audiences (Panopoulos et al., 2023). Previous studies have demonstrated that digital influencers possess the ability to shape the attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making processes of their followers (Casaló et al., 2020). Audrezet and Charry (2019) found that 19% of American consumers made purchase decisions based on the recommendations of digital influencers, with this proportion increasing to 36% among consumers under the age of 25. Moreover, existing research indicates that digital influencers can exert a considerable impact on followers’ behaviour, particularly in the context of sustainable consumption choices (Strähle & Gräff, 2017). According to Dekoninck et al. (2023), influencers play a notably decisive role in this context, as their perceived authenticity and actionable environmental advice make them valuable allies for pro-environmental organisations and policymakers. So-called “green influencers” incorporate environmental themes into their personal content, encouraging sustainable lifestyles and increasing awareness of the environmental consequences of unsustainable consumption (Kapoor et al., 2023; Knupfer et al., 2023). Previous studies have examined the influence of source credibility (Berne-Manero & Marzo-Navarro, 2020) and emotional engagement (Mawardi et al., 2024) on pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours. Research by Apostol et al. (2024) focuses on the relationship between influencer marketing and sustainability in a specific industry – cosmetics. Quantitative analysis ($n = 299$) showed that influencers significantly influence consumers’ purchasing decisions for sustainable cosmetics, with the authenticity and quality of the content they provide playing a key role. The results confirmed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.728$) between awareness of the term “sustainability” and the purchase of sustainable products, indicating a growing environmental awareness among consumers. A moderately strong correlation ($r = 0.56$) was

found between the credibility of influencers and their influence on purchasing decisions. In contrast, consumer income ($r = 0.22$) and frequency of social media use ($r = 0.183$) had only a weak influence. Consumers considered composition, sustainability, packaging and price the most, with composition being the most important. Instagram and TikTok have emerged as the most influential channels in spreading sustainable marketing messages. Bryła et al. (2022) conclude that, after thoroughly analysing the reviewed literature, the tools most effectively fostering sustainable consumption include influencer marketing, creating meaningful and high-quality content with an appropriate balance of design and creativity, and using emojis.

To address RQ3 (What future research directions emerge from existing studies examining the impact of influencers on sustainable consumer behaviour?), we analysed the articles in section titled: Impact of influencers on sustainable consumer behaviour (Table 2).

Table 4: Future research directions

<i>Name</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Name of research</i>	<i>Future research</i>
<i>Chen</i>	2019	True sustainable development of green technology: The influencers and risked moderation of sustainable motivational behavior.	• Should examine other green technology modes and compare findings across studies. • Uses cross-sectional questionnaire surveys, limiting insights into the dynamic process of sustainable consciousness, self-efficacy, confidence in health and environmental benefits, social norms, and sustainable behaviour. Future research could track changes across different usage stages using longitudinal methods.
<i>Bryła et al.</i>	2022	The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Engagement in Sustainable Consumption: A Systematic Literature Review.	• Investigate the ideal information chain in social media to prevent overload and fatigue among recipients. • Explore how cultural variations (using the Hofstede model) influence consumer engagement and inform mindful marketing strategies. • Examine consumer sentiment toward social media in promoting green consumption, including metrics like attachment strength and revenue from likes/shares. • Study consumer engagement in sustainable consumption in developing nations (e.g., Brazil, Indonesia, India) where social media usage is high, to understand diversified engagement strategies.
<i>Apostol, et al.</i>	2024	Beyond Trends: Promoting Sustainability through Influencer-Driven Product Endorsements.	• Longitudinal studies to track how influencer-driven sustainability messages affect behaviour over time. • This would deepen understanding of long-term trends and sustained consumer change. • Qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups) should complement quantitative findings to explore consumer motivations and perceptions more deeply.
<i>Munaro et al.</i>	2024	The impact of influencers on sustainable consumption: A systematic literature review. Sustainable Production and Consumption	• Most research on influencer engagement is in fashion, tourism, and food. Future studies could explore new sectors aligned with environmentally conscious concepts like the sharing and circular economy. • Influencer marketing for sustainability is still emerging, with current practices often mirroring traditional social media branding. Future research should consider evolving platforms, environmental concerns, consumer activism, and the shift toward content marketing.
<i>Sousa et al.</i>	2025	How influential can a sustainable digital influencer be? An exploratory study on the relationship between influencing skills and followers'	• Conduct future studies with more diverse and gender-balanced samples, notably including more male respondents, and replicate the research over time to assess changes in the impact of sustainable digital influencers. • Employ qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews with sustainable content creators, to gain deeper insights into how DIs perceive and apply their influencing skills.

<i>Hussain et al.</i>		environmental concerns, awareness and pro-environmental behaviour	Investigate how the identified influencing skills (cognitive, behavioural, interaction, and leadership) can be further developed to more effectively promote pro-environmental behaviour, beyond increasing awareness and concern.
	2025	The contribution of social media influencers to sustainable travel behaviour: the mediating role of inspiration and involvement in sustainable travel practices	- Should adopt longitudinal and mixed method designs to capture causality better and provide more robust insights. - Use larger and more diverse samples to enhance generalisability and validity. - Incorporate advanced analytical techniques (e.g., NCA alongside PLS-SEM) and examine specific SMI attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness, and interactivity. - Extend the model by exploring both inspiration and aspiration as mediators and by evaluating it across diverse cultural contexts.

Source: own processing, 2025

Future research on sustainable digital influencers and green consumer behaviour should adopt more comprehensive and methodologically diverse approaches to deepen theoretical and practical understanding. Summing up the insights from Table 4, future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal and mixed-method designs to capture causal relationships and track how influencer-driven sustainability messages affect attitudes and behaviours over time. Qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups could complement quantitative surveys to explore underlying motivations, perceptions, and self-perceived influencing skills of both consumers and content creators. Moreover, studies should include larger, more diverse, and gender-balanced samples and extend research to developing nations where social media engagement is high, thereby improving the generalisability of findings. Cross-cultural analyses, particularly using frameworks such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions, could further illuminate how cultural differences shape consumer engagement and responses to sustainability messages. Future work should also explore new sectors beyond fashion, tourism, and food, such as the sharing and circular economy, and examine how evolving social media platforms and marketing practices can better integrate environmental concerns and consumer activism. Additionally, investigating the optimal flow of sustainability information on social media to avoid overload and fatigue, along with analysing consumer sentiment metrics such as attachment strength and engagement revenue, would contribute to more effective and mindful green marketing strategies.

5 Conclusion

The conducted bibliometric and content analyses provide an overview of the current research landscape in influencer marketing, with a particular focus on its connection to sustainability. The results show that while influencer marketing has become a well-established and dynamically developing research area, sustainability is still not a dominant or clearly defined topic within this field. The relatively low occurrence of sustainability-related keywords such as sustainable development, sustainable consumption, or sustainable marketing indicates that the integration of environmental and ethical dimensions into influencer marketing research remains at an early stage. The mapping of six thematic clusters demonstrated that existing studies primarily concentrate on marketing strategies, communication effectiveness, consumer behaviour, and ethical aspects, whereas sustainability appears only marginally within these clusters. This finding highlights a significant research gap and underscores the need for deeper exploration of how influencers can contribute to promoting sustainable lifestyles and responsible consumer choices. The results further suggest that future studies should go beyond mapping and focus on empirical evidence linking influencer credibility, authenticity, and message value to sustainable consumption behaviour. Expanding the analysis to include

additional databases, longitudinal trends, and cross-cultural comparisons could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of this emerging research area. Overall, this paper contributes to the academic discussion by systematically mapping the current state of knowledge on influencer marketing and identifying untapped opportunities for advancing sustainability-oriented research within digital communication.

The article acknowledges several limitations that frame opportunities for future research. First, the analysis relies primarily on publications indexed in the Scopus database and open-access sources, which may not capture all relevant studies or perspectives available in other databases. The time restriction also limits the longitudinal scope of the findings, preventing a deeper understanding of how sustainability in influencer marketing has evolved over a more extended period. Moreover, while the bibliometric and content analysis effectively identify thematic clusters and research gaps, it remains a quantitative and descriptive approach that does not provide empirical evidence on causal relationships or behavioural impacts. The paper also notes that sustainability is not yet a dominant or well-defined topic within influencer marketing research, with relatively low keyword occurrence and fragmented coverage across clusters. Consequently, the findings may underrepresent interdisciplinary or practice-oriented studies connecting influencer marketing to sustainability. Finally, there is a need to expand the analysis through cross-cultural comparisons, additional databases, and empirical validation to strengthen the generalisability and depth of future research in this emerging area.

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